MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
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  UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
  DIRECTOR, DEFENSE RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING
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  ASSISTANTS TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
  DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
  DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Establishing and Maintaining a Publicly Accessible Department of Defense Web Information Service

The Internet, in particular the World Wide Web, offers an unprecedented opportunity for the Department of Defense to communicate with the American people. With those opportunities also come new challenges. This policy document addresses several important issues related to the use of the World Wide Web as a medium for providing public information to a global audience.

The following principles of information, signed by the Secretary of Defense on April 1, 1997, govern the release of defense information in all forms, including publicly accessible web information services and other publicly accessible areas of the Internet. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs has the primary responsibility for carrying out these principles.
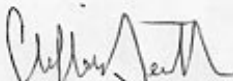
It is the policy of the Department of Defense to make available timely and accurate information so that the public, Congress, and the news media may assess and understand the facts about national security and defense strategy. In carrying out the policy, the following principles of information apply:

- Information will be made fully and readily available, consistent with statutory requirements, unless its release is precluded by current and valid security classification. The provisions of the Freedom of Information Act will be supported in both letter and spirit.
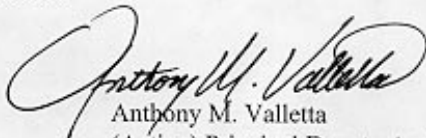
- A free flow of general and military information will be made available, without censorship or propaganda, to the men and women of the Armed Forces, and their dependents.

- Information will not be classified or otherwise withheld to protect the government from criticism or embarrassment.

- Information will be withheld only when disclosure would adversely affect national security, or threaten the safety or privacy of the men and women of the Armed Forces.

- The Department's obligation to provide the public with information on its major programs may require detailed public affairs planning and coordination with other government agencies. The sole purpose of such activity is to expedite the flow of accurate information to the public: propaganda has no place in Department of Defense public affairs programs.

The policy established in the document "Establishing and Maintaining a Publicly Accessible DoD Web Information Service" (Attachment) is effective immediately. In the future, it will be released as a DoD Directive and Instruction.

Clifford H. Bernath
Principal Deputy Assistant
Secretary of Defense for
Public Affairs

Anthony M. Valletta
(Acting) Principal Deputy Assistant
Secretary of Defense for
Command, Control, Communications
and Intelligence

Office of the Secretary of Defense

Policy for

ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING A PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE WEB INFORMATION SERVICE

July 18 , 1997

Updated January 9, 1998

Policy for
ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING A PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE WEB INFORMATION SERVICE

References: (a) 5 USC Chapter 35, "Paperwork Reduction Act", as amended

       (b) Government Printing and Binding Regulations, Joint Committee on Printing, Congress, US, February 1990, No. 26

       (c) National Archives and Records Administration General Schedule 20, August 1995

       (d) Deputy Secretary of Defense Policy Memorandum, Government Information Locator Service (GILS), 2 September 1995

       (e) Memo from the Chairman, Joint Committee on Printing, granting waiver for Commercial Enterprise Newspapers, July 15, 1983

       (f) Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin 95-01, Establishment of Government Information Locator Service, 7 December 1994

       (g) DoD Directive 5040.5, Alteration of Official DoD Imagery, August 29, 1995, ATSD(PA)

       (h) DoD Directive 5230.9, Clearance of DoD Information for Public Release, April 9, 1996

       (i) DoD Directive 5400.7-R, DoD Freedom of Information Act Program, May 22, 1997, ASD(PA)

       (j) DoD Directive 5500.7-R, Joint Ethics Regulation (JER), August 30, 1993

       (k) DoD Directive 8910.1-M, DoD Procedures for Management of Information Requirements, June 11, 1993, ASD(C3I)

       (l) DoD Instruction 1015.10, Programs for Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR), November 3, 1995, ASD (FMP) through Ch 1, October 31, 1996

       (m) DoD Instruction 5120.4, DoD Newspapers and Civilian Enterprise Publications, May 29, 1996, AFIS

       (n) DoD Instruction 5230.29, Security and Policy Review of DoD Information for Public Release, May 6, 1996, ASD(PA)

       (o) AR 60-20/AFR 147-14, Army and Air Force Exchange Service Operating Policies, 15 December 1992

       (p) DoD Directive 5240.1, DoD Intelligence Activities, April 25, 1988, ASD(C3I)

1. PURPOSE

This policy memorandum outlines policy related to establishing and maintaining publicly accessible web information services. It supersedes the "Guidelines for Establishing and Maintaining a Department of Defense Web Information Service" published by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) on 28 December 1995.

2. <u>APPLICABILITY</u>

This policy applies to:

2.1. The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the Military Departments (including the Coast Guard when it is operated as a Military Service in the Navy), the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Defense Agencies, and the Department of Defense (DoD) Field Activities (hereafter referred to collectively as "the DoD Components").

2.2. Publicly accessible web information services and other publicly accessible services using the Internet.

3. <u>DEFINITIONS</u>

3.1. Internet. The loosely connected worldwide collection of computer systems that uses a common set of communications standards to send and receive electronic information.

3.2. World Wide Web or web. The subset of the Internet capable of providing the public with user-friendly graphics-based multi-media access to information on the Internet. It is the most popular means for storing and linking Internet-based information in all multi-media formats. Navigation is accomplished through a set of linked documents that may reside on the same computer or on computers located almost anywhere else in the world.

3.3. Web Information Service. A collection of web documents related to a common subject or set of subjects, including the "home page" and the linked subordinate information.

3.4. Web site. The physical location of the computer where web documents reside. This term is also commonly used to refer to a web information service.

3.5. Home page. The index or introductory document for a web information service.

3.6. DefenseLINK. The name of the official publicly accessible web information service for the Department of Defense (DoD). DefenseLINK provides the official single point of access to all DoD information on the World Wide Web, and establishes a means to ensure that the information is readily accessible, properly cleared and released, accurate, consistent, appropriate and timely. When referencing DefenseLINK, the name should be shown exactly as indicated here, with small letters and CAPS. Graphic files of the logo are available by clicking on the Pentagon on the DefenseLINK home page.

3.7. Official DoD web information service. A DoD web information service that is developed and maintained with appropriated funds; and for which the DoD Component, or a subordinate organization, exercises editorial control over content. The content of official DoD web information services is of an official nature that may be endorsed as the official position of the DoD Component. Content may include official news releases, installation history, command

position papers, etc. Official DoD web information services are prohibited from displaying sponsorships or commercial advertisements.

3.8. Unofficial DoD web information service. A DoD web information service that is developed and maintained with non-appropriated funds; and for which the DoD Component, or a subordinate organization, does not usually exercise editorial control over content. The content of unofficial DoD web information services is not endorsed as the official position of the DoD Component. Content will not normally include official news releases, installation history, command position papers, etc. Unofficial DoD web information services may include sponsorships and commercial advertisements, and may also advertise products for sale, in accordance with the mission of the organization. In most cases, unofficial DoD web information services are developed and maintained by commercial or nonprofit organizations. Certain military-affiliated organizations may develop and maintain unofficial DoD web information services. Such organizations include service exchanges and Morale, Welfare and Recreation activities that use non-appropriated funds.

4. <u>POLICY</u>

4.1. Management Responsibility. Consistent with other leadership responsibilities for public and internal communication; the decision whether or not to establish an organizational web information service, and to publish appropriate instructions and regulations for a web information service, is hereby delegated to each DoD Component. Heads of DoD Components may delegate this authority to lower levels, but shall ensure that all information placed on publicly accessible web information services is properly cleared and released.   Detailed requirements for clearance of information for public release are located in DOD Instruction 5230.29 (reference (n)).

4.1.1. All DoD Components, or subordinate organizations, that establish publicly accessible web information services are responsible for ensuring that adequate procedures are in place and followed for:
- management oversight and regular functional review of the service;
- operational integrity and security of the computer and network supporting the service;
- validation of the accuracy, consistency, appropriateness, and timeliness of all information placed on the service;
- registration of the service with the Government Information Locator Service (GILS, http://www.dtic.mil/defenselink/locator/);
- funding, equipping, staffing and training necessary to develop and maintain the service.

4.1.2. Each organization implementing a computer web site for their publicly accessible web information service shall establish a security certification and accreditation procedure. Successful implementation depends on defining security requirements early. All security-related disciplines (computer, communications, personnel, etc.) shall be considered in the requirements definition for the web service.   Cost versus risk tradeoffs shall be evaluated and security requirements assigned accordingly.

4.2. Support of Mission. Each publicly accessible web information service shall have a clearly defined purpose that supports the mission of the DoD Component. The defined purpose and general content of the service shall be approved by the head of the DoD Component, or his/her designee in accordance with official policies. A publicly accessible web information service shall be limited only to information for which the DoD Component is directly responsible. Non-copyrighted material, text, clip art, images and sound or video clips may be used only if they relate to the Component's mission. Copyrighted material shall be used only in accordance with current copyright laws. In accordance with the Joint Ethics Regulation, product endorsements or preferential treatment shall NOT appear on any official DoD publicly accessible web information service.

4.3. Government Information Locator Service (GILS) Requirement. In accordance with OMB Bulletin 95-01 (reference (f)), and the Deputy Secretary of Defense policy memorandum (reference (d)), each publicly accessible web information service, major publication and major collection of information is required to be registered with GILS. GILS is designed to be an on-line "card catalog" designed to help the public access government information. Information about GILS requirements and instructions on how to receive the on-line submission form are available on DefenseLINK (http://www.dtic.mil/defenselink), under "Search". The GILS registration process requires the name of the release authority as verification that the information has been properly cleared for public release. DoD Components are responsible for ensuring GILS registrations are completed. DoD Component web information services shall provide links to the web information services of subordinate organizations only if those web services have been registered with a completed GILS record.

4.4. Privacy and Security Notice. A privacy and security notice must be given to users of each publicly accessible web information service and shall be prominently displayed or announced on at least the first page of all major sections of each web information service. Providing a statement such as "Please read this privacy and security notice." linked to the actual notice is satisfactory. Organizations shall avoid flashy graphics or other indicators that create a misperception of danger, such as skull-and-crossbones logos or "warning" signs. If the web site collects any information on usage or other log files, visitors shall be notified of what information is collected, why it is collected and how it is used. Agencies subject to DoD Directive 5240.1 (reference (p)) must comply with its provisions.

4.4.1. Text of Privacy and Security Notice
The following privacy and security notice may be tailored in the indicated areas by each organization sponsoring a publicly accessible web information service. The notice shall be approved by the appropriate local legal authority before use.

Link from Index.html pages -- "Please read this privacy and security notice."

( ) - indicates sections to be tailored at the installation level

[ ] - indicates hyperlinks

* - indicates information located at the hyperlink destination indicated

PRIVACY AND SECURITY NOTICE

1. (DefenseLINK) is provided as a public service by the ([Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense-Public Affairs] and the [Defense Technical Information Center]).

2. Information presented on (DefenseLINK) is considered public information and may be distributed or copied. Use of appropriate byline/photo/image credits is requested.

3. For site management, [information is collected]* for statistical purposes. This government computer system uses software programs to create summary statistics, which are used for such purposes as assessing what information is of most and least interest, determining technical design specifications, and identifying system performance or problem areas.

4. For site security purposes and to ensure that this service remains available to all users, this government computer system employs software programs to monitor network traffic to identify unauthorized attempts to upload or change information, or otherwise cause damage.

5. Except for authorized law enforcement investigations, no other attempts are made to identify individual users or their usage habits. Raw data logs are used for no other purposes and are scheduled for regular destruction in accordance with [National Archives and Records Administration General Schedule 20].

Agencies subject to DoD Directive 5240.1 shall add the following to paragraph 5: "All data collection activities are in strict accordance with DoD Directive 5240.1 (reference (p))."

6. Unauthorized attempts to upload information or change information on this service are strictly prohibited and may be punishable under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986 and the National Information Infrastructure Protection Act.

7. If you have any questions or comments about the information presented here, please forward them to (us using the DefenseLINK [Comment Form]).

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* Link from above - "information is collected" to the following text:

NOTE: The information below should be tailored, if necessary, to show an accurate example of the specific information being collected.

Example: Information Collected from (DefenseLINK) for Statistical Purposes

Below is an example of the information collected based on a standard request for a World Wide Web document:

xxx.yyy.com - - [28/Jan/1997:00:00:01 -0500]
"GET /defenselink/news/nr012797.html HTTP/1.0" 200 16704
Mozilla 3.0/www.altavista.digital.com

xxx.yyy.com (or 123.123.23.12)-- this is the host name (or IP address) associated with the requester (you as the visitor). In this case, (...**.com**) the requester is coming from a commercial address. Depending on the requester's method of network connection, the host name (or IP address) may or may not identify a specific computer. Connections via many Internet Service Providers assign different IP addresses for each session, so the host name identifies only the ISP. The host name (or IP address) will identify a specific computer if that computer has a fixed IP address.
[28/Jan/1997:00:00:01 -0500] -- this is the date and time of the request
"GET /defenselink/news/nr012797.html HTTP/1.0" -- this is the location of the requested file on (DefenseLINK)
200 -- this is the status code - 200 is OK - the request was filled
16704 -- this is the size of the requested file in bytes
Mozilla 3.0 -- this identifies the type of browser software used to access the page, which indicates what design parameters to use in constructing the pages
www.altavista.digital.com - this indicates the last site the person visited, which indicates how people find (DefenseLINK)

Requests for other types of documents use similar information. No other user-identifying information is collected.

4.5. External Links

4.5.1. Approval. The ability to hyperlink to sources external to your organization is a fundamental part of the World Wide Web, and can add significant value to the functionality of publicly accessible DoD web information services. It is advisable for DoD Components to establish objective and supportable criteria or guidelines for the selection and maintenance of links to external web pages.

4.5.1.1. Links to non-DoD web resources should support the organization's mission. External links should be reviewed periodically to ensure their continued suitability. If the content of a linked external site becomes questionable or objectionable, remove the link.

4.5.1.2. In accordance with DoD 5500.7-R (reference (j)), no product endorsements or preferential treatment shall be given on publicly accessible official DoD web information services.

4.5.1.3. No payment of any kind shall be accepted in exchange for a link placed on an organization's publicly accessible official DoD web information service.

4.5.1.4. In accordance with reference (j), DoD web information services shall not require or encourage users to choose any specific browser software. Only text or hyperlinked text shall be used to direct visitors to software download sites. Graphics or logos depicting companies/products shall not appear on DoD web information services.

4.5.1.5. Organizations considering the use of "frames" technology to connect to external sites should consult legal counsel concerning trademark and copyright issues before establishing such links.

4.5.1.6. Organizations are encouraged to link to authorized activities in support of the organization's mission, such as the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES, http://www.aafes.com), the Navy Exchange Service Command (NEXCOM, http://www.navy-nex.com) and the Marine Corps Exchange. If these sites contain commercial advertisements or sponsorships, the appropriate disclaimer below shall be given.

4.5.1.7. When external links are included, the head of the DoD Component, or the subordinate organization, is responsible for ensuring that a disclaimer is made that neither the DoD nor the organization endorses the product or organization at the destination, nor does the DoD exercise any responsibility over the content at the destination. This includes credits given to contractors who produce DoD web information services.

4.5.1.8. Organizations must realize that once the decision is made to include a link to one non-DoD site, the organization may have to link to all similar sites.

4.5.2. Disclaimer for External Links. The disclaimer below shall be displayed when linking to external sites. This disclaimer may appear on the page or pages listing external links, or through an intermediate "exit notice" page generated by the server machine whenever a request is made for any site outside of the official DoD web information service (usually the .mil domain). An example of such an exit notice is located at the White House WWW site at http://www.whitehouse.gov.

> "The appearance of this hyperlink does not constitute endorsement by the (Department of Defense/the U.S. Army/the U.S. Navy/the U.S. Air Force/the U.S. Marine Corps, etc.) of this web site or the information, products or services contained therein. For other than authorized activities such as military exchanges and Morale, Welfare and Recreation sites, the (Department of Defense/the U.S. Army/the U.S. Navy/the U.S. Air Force/the U.S. Marine Corps, etc.) does not exercise any editorial control over the information you may find at this location. This link is provided consistent with the stated purpose of this DoD web site."

4.5.3. DoD Newspapers. The policies and procedures in DoD Instruction 5120.4 (reference (m)) apply to all DoD newspapers and civilian enterprise publications, whether printed or electronic.

4.5.3.1. DoD funded newspapers and editorial content of civilian enterprise publications may be posted on DoD web sites without advertising. Commanders and heads of organizations are authorized to link to a commercial/civilian web site carrying the authorized civilian enterprise publications, which include advertising, provided the standard disclaimer for external links is given.

4.5.3.2. This policy information will be included in the next revision of DoD Instruction 5120.4. Any questions concerning this policy may be addressed to the American Forces Information Service, Print Media Plans and Policy section, (703) 428-0628.

4.6. Image Manipulation Standards. Official DoD imagery provided on publicly accessible DoD web information services must conform to DoD Directive 5040.5 (reference (g)) located on the web at http://www.dtic.mil/adm/.

4.7. Restricted Access. No information which is withholdable from the public pursuant to statute, or intended for restricted access or limited distribution, may be placed on a publicly accessible web information service. Nor should a public site have links to such information. This prohibition includes information that is CLASSIFIED, UNCLASSIFIED but SENSITIVE, FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY (FOUO), and privacy protected. Information cleared for public release under the Freedom of Information Act may be posted on publicly accessible web information services.

4.8. Commercial Sponsorship and Advertising. Commercial sponsorships, advertisements and endorsements are prohibited on publicly accessible pages of official DoD web information services. Publicly accessible web information services are official communications to the public. Just as the DoD would not print advertisements on news releases, the Department shall not post advertisements on publicly accessible official DoD web information services. Organizations shall ensure that the credibility of official information is not adversely affected by association with commercial sponsorships, advertisements or endorsements.

4.8.1. Non-appropriated Fund Activities and Web Information Services. In accordance with DoD Instruction 1015.10 (reference (l)). MWR programs may have commercial sponsors and may sell electronic advertising as outlined in that instruction. As the instruction points out, MWR products with advertisements are intended for distribution to the DoD internal audience authorized to take advantage of these programs.

4.8.1.1. However, having advertisements on pages that are part of an official, publicly accessible DoD web information service is inappropriate. Organizations are encouraged to include official information about non-appropriated fund (NAF) activities on official DoD web sites as long as the information does not include commercial sponsorships or advertisements.

4.8.1.2. With organization approval, NAF activities may use non-appropriated funds to develop and maintain commercial web sites for unofficial information, where commercial sponsorship or advertising may appear. External links to authorized, unofficial NAF commercial web sites are authorized, with an appropriate disclaimer preceding the actual connection to the NAF commercial web site to avoid product endorsement or preferential treatment.

4.8.1.3. Official information pertaining to the NAF activity may be posted on the commercial non-appropriated fund web site with installation commander/organization head approval, but only if it is also posted on the official publicly accessible DoD web information service. Other official information shall not be posted to the commercial site.

4.9. Design Standards and Non-standard Features (ActiveX and Java)

4.9.1. Design of publicly accessible web information service documents should conform to the current Hypertext Markup Language standards from the World Wide Web Consortium, located at: http://www.w3.org/pub/WWW/MarkUp/Wilbur/. Use of other non-standard or browser-specific features may mean a portion of visitors cannot access certain information.

Updated as of January 9, 1998: The latest Hypertext Markup Language specification from the World Wide Web Consortium is located on their site under Technical Reports -> Recommendations at http://www.w3.org/TR/#Recommendations.

4.9.2. Incorporation of non-standard or browser-specific features into web pages shall also be evaluated in light of the potential security risks. Features such as Active X controls and Java components have the capability of installing malicious programs on networks or on individual machines, if downloaded. The same danger exists when downloading any executable file, which is why many installations have a policy in place prohibiting downloads of such files. In general terms, it is recommended that existing local guidelines concerning the download/installation of executable files should apply to Active X controls, Java components, and any other software that installs programs on networks or individual machines.

4.10. Collection of Information. To better serve the public, in certain instances it is necessary and appropriate to collect information from visitors to web information services.

4.10.1. Forms/Information Collection.

4.10.1.1. In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, (PRA), (reference (a)), collection of information from the public shall be approved by OMB under some circumstances.

4.10.1.2. Requests for identical information from ten or more members of the public must be approved by OMB, such as surveys using check box, radio button or text form fields.

4.10.1.3. The PRA applies to electronic forms/information collections on web information services that collect standardized information from the public. It does not apply to collection of information strictly from DoD employees or service members.

4.10.1.4. Forms for general solicitations of comments which do not seek responses to standard questions, such as the common opinion-based feedback forms and e-mail links, do not require OMB clearance.

4.10.1.5. Organizations are responsible for ensuring their publicly accessible web information services comply with this requirement and follow procedures in DoD 8910.1-M (reference (k)). For more information about the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, contact your local Information Management Control Office.

4.10.2. Usage Statistics. As a management function, evaluation of site usage data (log files) is a valuable way to evaluate the effectiveness of web information services. However, collection of data from public sites for undisclosed purposes is inappropriate. There are commercially available software packages that will summarize log file data into usable statistics for management purposes, such as the most/least requested documents, type of browser software used to access the web information service, etc. Use of this type of software is appropriate, as long as there is full disclosure as specified in the privacy and security notice, above. Organizations should establish a destruction disposition schedule for collected data.

4.10.3. User-identifying Collection Methods. In accordance with the privacy and security notice above, it is prohibited to use methods which collect user-identifying information such as extensive lists of previously visited sites, e-mail addresses, or other information to identify or build profiles on individual visitors. It is permissible to use "cookies" or other methods to collect or store non-user-identifying information to customize user sessions; however, users shall always be notified of what information is collected or stored, why it is being done and how it is used. Agencies subject to DoD Directive 5240.1 (reference (p)) must comply with its provisions.

4.11. DoD Webmaster Listserv. To share and coordinate information, an e-mail listserv has been established for all DoD "webmasters." All personnel responsible for developing and/or maintaining a web information service are encouraged to join this listserv. Although it is maintained by an Army unit, the list is open to members in all services. Instructions are located at http://www.army.mil/weblist.htm.

5. <u>RESPONSIBILITIES</u>

5.1. The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (OASD(PA)) shall:

5.1.1. Establish and maintain DefenseLINK as the official single point of access to all DoD information on the World Wide Web.

5.1.2. In coordination with the other OSD Principal Staff Assistants, provide oversight policy and guidance to ensure the absolute credibility of defense information released to the public through publicly accessible web information services.

5.1.3.   Monitor compliance of this policy.

5.1.4. Ensure compliance with this policy for those activities in their purview.

5.2. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence (ASD(C3I)) shall:

5.2.1. Maintain liaison with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs to provide policy oversight and guidance to ensure the effective dissemination of defense information via the Internet.

5.2.2. Provide technical support consistent with existing communication responsibilities.

5.2.3. Ensure compliance with this policy for those activities in their purview.

5.3. The other OSD Principal Staff Assistants shall:

5.3.1. Maintain liaison with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs to provide policy oversight and guidance to ensure the absolute credibility of defense information released to the public through publicly accessible web information services.

5.3.3. Ensure compliance with this policy for those activities in their purview.

5.4. The heads of the DoD Components shall ensure compliance with this policy for those activities in their purview.

6. <u>EFFECTIVE DATE</u> This policy is effective immediately.